

University Orthopedics, Inc.  
Sports Medicine Division

## MEDIAL COLLATERAL LIGAMENT (MCL) RECONSTRUCTION/ REPAIR POST-OP REHABILITATION PROTOCOL

The following is a protocol for postoperative patients following ACL reconstruction. The primary goal of this protocol is to protect the reconstruction while steadily progressing towards and ultimately achieving pre-injury level of activity. Please note this protocol is a guideline. Achieving the criteria of each phase should be emphasized more than the approximate duration.

### **PHASE I: 0-2 WEEKS POSTOPERATIVE**

#### **GOALS:**

- Pain/effusion control
- Good quad control

#### **AMBULATION, DRESSING, AND BRACE USE:**

Dressing – POD 1: Debulk dressing, TED Hose in place

– POD 2: Change dressing, keep wound covered, continue TED Hose

– POD 7-10: Sutures out, D/C TED Hose when effusion resolved

Brace x 8 weeks – Locked in extension for ambulation

Crutches – Partial weight bearing (PWB) in brace

(no more than 50% of body weight)

#### **EXERCISES:**

Calf pumping

AAROM, AROM 0-90 degrees

Passive extension with heel on bolster or prone hangs

Electrical stimulation in full extension with quad sets and SLR

Quad sets, Co-contractions quads/hams

Straight leg raise (SLR) x 3 on mat in brace – No ADD

Short arc quads

No stationary bike x 6 weeks

Ice pack with knee in full extension after exercise

### **PHASE II: ~2-4 WEEKS POSTOPERATIVE**

#### **GOALS:**

- ROM 0-90 degrees
- No extensor lag

#### **AMBULATION AND BRACE USE:**

Brace x 8 weeks – Open to 0-45 degrees

Crutches – PWB in brace

#### **EXERCISES:**

Continue appropriate previous exercises

Scar massage when incision healed

AAROM, AROM 0-90 degrees only

Total Gym for ROM (level 1-3)

– Passive flexion to 90 degrees (push up with opposite leg)

SLR x 3 on mat, no brace if good quad control – No ADD

Double leg heel raises

No stationary bike x 6 weeks

Stretches – Hamstring, Hip Flexors, ITB

### **PHASE III: ~4-6 WEEKS POSTOPERATIVE**

#### **GOALS:**

- ROM 0-120 degrees
- No effusion

#### **AMBULATION AND BRACE USE:**

Brace x 8 weeks – Open to 0-90 degrees

Crutches – PWB in brace

**EXERCISES:**

Continue appropriate previous exercises  
AAROM, AROM 0-120 degrees  
Standing SLR x 3 with light Theraband bilaterally  
– May begin Hip ADD with Theraband if good LE control in full extension  
Total Gym (level 3-5)– Mini squats 0-45 degrees  
– Passive flexion to 90 degrees (push up with opposite leg)  
Leg press 0-45 degrees with resistance up to ¼ body weight  
Hamstring curls 0-45 degrees – Carpet drags or rolling stool (closed chain)  
No stationary bike x 6 weeks

**PHASE IV: ~6-8 WEEKS POSTOPERATIVE**

GOAL: Full ROM

**AMBULATION AND BRACE USE:**

Brace – Open to full range  
Crutches – Weight bearing as tolerated(WBAT), D/C crutch when gait is normal

**EXERCISES:**

Continue appropriate previous exercises  
PROM, AAROM, AROM to regain full motion  
Standing SLR x 4 with light Theraband bilaterally  
Wall squats 0-45 degrees  
Leg press 0-60 degrees with resistance up to ½ body weight  
Hamstring curls through full range – Carpet drags or rolling stool  
Forward, lateral and retro step downs in parallel bars  
– No knee flexion past 45 degrees (small step)  
Proprioceptive training – Single leg standing in parallel bars  
– Double leg BAPS for weight shift  
Single leg heel raises  
Treadmill – Forwards and backwards walking  
Stationary bike – Progressive resistance and time  
Elliptical trainer

**PHASE V: ~8-12 WEEKS POSTOPERATIVE**

GOAL: Walk 2 miles at 15min/mile pace

BRACE USE: D/C BRACE

**EXERCISES:**

Continue appropriate previous exercises with progressive resistance  
Leg press 0-90 degrees with resistance as tolerated  
Hamstring curls on weight machine  
Knee extension weight machine  
Forward, lateral and retro step downs (medium to large step)  
Proprioceptive training – Single leg BAPS, ball toss and body blade  
– Grid exercises  
Continued on following page  
Treadmill – Walking progression program  
Stairmaster – Small steps  
Pool therapy

**PHASE VI: ~3-4 MONTHS POSTOPERATIVE**

GOAL: Run 2 miles at an easy pace

**EXERCISES:**

Continue appropriate previous exercises  
Fitter  
Slide board  
Functional activities – Figure 8s, gentle loops, large zigzags  
Treadmill – Running progression program  
Pool therapy – Swimming laps  
Quad stretches

**PHASE VII: ~4-6 MONTHS POSTOPERATIVE**

GOAL: Return to all activities

**EXERCISES:**

Continue appropriate previous exercises  
Agility drills / Plyometrics  
Sit-up progression  
Running progression to track  
Transition to home / gym program

***No contact sports until 6 months post-op***